

## Rail Line Purchase By State Suggested

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The Wasatch Mountain Railway Co. believes the best way to dispose of the right-of-way for the "Heber Creeper" train is to have the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation purchase it.

Lowe Ashton, company president, made this proposal Tuesday to Harold J. Tippetts, division director, Marvin Jensen, assistant director, James Moyle, chairman of the Parks and Recreation Board, and Gordon Harmston, executive director, Utah Department of Natural Resources.

Ashton suggested the park agency purchase the right-of-way from the State Road Commission and issue a lease to his company to run the Heber Creeper from Wildwood near Bridal Veil Falls in Provo Canyon to Heber City as a tourist attraction.

The State Road Commission acquired the railroad right-of-way from the Denver and Rio Grande Western Railway for \$264,000 with the possibility of building a high-speed

highway around the west and north portion of Deer Creek Reservoir.

The road presently crosses Deer Creek Dam and goes to Heber City via the south and east portions of the reservoir.

Tippetts explained that as of Jan. 1 the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation signed an agreement with the Provo River Water Uses Association and Bureau of Reclamation to

administer the recreation on and around Deer Creek Reservoir.

A high-speed highway on the west and north sections would make access to the reservoir from Wasatch Mountain State Park difficult.

Moyle feels the state should have ownership of the railroad right-of-way rather than a private corporation as has

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been suggested. Tippetts said the most desirable place for a boat ramp is on the west side of the reservoir.

Ashton said having a high-speed highway around the entire reservoir would ruin the environmental qualities of the area.

He suggested the lease agreement to operate the railroad contain a provision that the purchase price of the right-of-way would be paid back by the railway company through revenue.

Ashton said he having problems plus the land are security for the investment because the salvage value of them in case the company went bankrupt would be nearly equal to the purchase price.

In any event, in connection with Statehood Week, the "Heber Creeper" will make a trip from Sundance Ski Resort in Provo Canyon to Heber City Saturday at 9 a.m. Only invited guests will ride.

At noon in Heber City, the "Creeper" will leave for a trip down the canyon and back that will be free to the public, Ashton said. There will also be snow machine riding, cutter races, gliders soaring overhead and other winter activities for the public.

Ashton said he is having problems keeping engine 618 ready for the run in freezing temperatures. He said it has been at least 20 degrees below zero for five straight days in Heber Valley.

"We have gone through 20,000 gallons of water in the steam engine and nearly 20 tons of coal, but we are definitely going to run Saturday. We will thaw out the steam pipes in the cars," he said.

The old engine blasted through seven-foot drifts in Provo Canyon in a track-clearing operation. Ashton said the hospital cars haven't been refurbished yet, but riders should use their imagination as to what they'll look like.

75 Years Ago

In Utah

UTAH

1869-1944

DIAMOND JUBILEE

Republicans, Democrats and Populists dropped party barriers on this day 75 years ago to celebrate what the Deseret News headlines described as the "Greatest Social Event in Utah's History—A Scene of Unparalleled Decorative Splendor."

It was the Grand Inaugural Ball which celebrated the installation earlier that day of Heber M. Wells as Utah's first governor. He and a predominantly Republican slate of state officials were victorious in the pre-statehood elections Nov. 5, 1895.

#### LARGE CROWD

More than 15,000 persons crowded into the Tabernacle and thousands stood outside as Chief Justice Charles S. Zane administered the oath of office to Gov. Wells.

For the occasion, the ZCMI clothing factory fabricated a huge flag measuring 75 by 100 feet which was hung under the huge dome roof of the Tabernacle. "Old Glory" containing a 45th star for Utah is believed by some historians to

be the largest American flag ever made up to that time.

The 350-voice Tabernacle Choir sang "Utah We Love Thee" by Evan Stephens and the Rev. T. C. Hiff of the Methodist Church gave the benediction.

A 45-gun salute boomed out over the city and members of the Legislature adjourned to the City-County Building for a special session to elect Frank J. Cannon and Arthur Brown as Utah's first U.S. senators.

The first state Legislature was headed by George M. Cannon, president of the Senate, and Presley Denney, speaker of the House.

#### OTHER OFFICIALS

Other state officials elected Nov. 5 included James T. Hammond, secretary of state; A. C. Bishop, attorney general; James Chioman, treasurer; Morgan Richards, auditor; Dr. John R. Park, superintendent of public instruction; Charles S. Zane, George W. Barch and James A. Miner as justices of the Supreme Court, and Clarence E. Allen, representative.